Lost in Thoughts

By: Ali Haidar

I found myself inside an old wooden house. I wanted to leave, but the front door was locked tight. The place felt like the first floor, and I hoped there might be a way out on the rooftop. But it was too dark to see anything.

Reaching out blindly, my hand touched something cold — a door handle. To my surprise, the door creaked open.

Inside was a bright, white room, but strangely, the light didn't seem to come from anywhere. It felt trapped inside the room, like it had nowhere to go.

There were three figures in the room: an old man, a young muscular man, and a child. I tried to call out to them, but my voice was lost in silence. They couldn't hear me.

I recognized the old man — it was my father. They spoke quietly, unaware of my presence even though I stood right before them.

The young man looked scared. From the tense lines on his face, it was clear he was in trouble. The child was unfamiliar to me. I heard their words, but they didn't make sense.

My father said, "He is just a child to you for now, but he won't be for long. He's going to change your life forever, just like he did mine. This is a cycle. What happened to me will happen to you, and then to him. You have to let things be as they are — that will be the better choice."

I tried to speak to them, but no sound came out. Frustrated, I reached to touch my father's shoulder — but my hand passed through him like smoke. How was this possible? I tried again, but nothing changed.

Feeling helpless, I turned away and left through the same door. But this time, the house looked different. The lights were on. The trees and decorations made it feel like Christmas, but the blood smeared across the floor and walls was terrifying.

The trail of blood led to the stairs — it looked like someone had dragged a body upward. I followed it. The blood was fresh and warm when I touched it. The smell was the worst I had ever experienced.

It led to a room; its door handle stained with bloody fingerprints. I opened the door, and suddenly my body froze. My hands turned white and cold, and I felt numb.

Inside lay the bodies of the three people I had just seen — my father, the young man, and the child. They had been brutally stabbed.

A note, written in blood, rested on one of the bodies. I picked it up, and the words shocked me:

“If your mistake takes someone’s life, then it’s not a mistake — it’s a crime. And you must be punished accordingly.”

I wanted to look away, to erase the image from my mind. I fled the room without looking back and hurried up the stairs toward the rooftop. But the stairs seemed endless — no matter how many steps I took, I never got closer.

At last, my strength gave out, and I fell down the stairs into darkness.”

“That’s all, sir. Do you think the experiment — showing the unseen dreams — was successful this time? Subject 2898-AJ saw exactly what we intended. What are your thoughts?”

“It succeeded. But that wasn’t a dream. It was the reality he ignored — just like a dream.”